

July 8, 2008

TO: Teresa Parsons
Director's Review Program Supervisor

FROM: Kristie Wilson
Director's Review Investigator

RE: **Nancy Harris v Seattle Community College (SCC)**
Allocation Review Request No. ALLO-07-012

On June 5, 2008, a Director's Review meeting took place by telephone conference call concerning the allocation of Ms. Harris's position. Present during the telephone conference call were Nancy Harris SCC, Jennifer Mason WFSE, Kathryn Woodley SCC Human Resource Director, Jan West SCC Dean of Health and Human Services, and myself.

Investigator Finding

My review finds that Ms. Harris's position is properly allocated as an Office Assistant 2.

Background

On September 8, 2006 Ms. Harris filed a Position Questionnaire (PQ) form to SCC Human Resource Office requesting that her Office Assistant 2 position be reallocated to the class of Program Assistant. Jan West, SCC Dean of Health and Human Services, reviewed her request and issued her decision by letter dated January 31, 2007. In her letter (Exhibit A-7) Ms. West outlined the reasons and basis for her denial. On March 1, 2007, Ms. Harris filed a request for a Director's review.

Summary of Ms. Harris's perspective

Ms. Harris states that her primary job duties consist of setting up and maintaining a database used to track current and potential student data for the nursing program. This data includes grades, immunization records, and program ready students that have met all

their prerequisites and support classes. The database contains confidential information such as criminal background history. Ms. Harris asserts that she created this database and also the faculty database. The faculty database contains immunization records and nursing license information. Ms. Harris states that she ensures that the nurses have renewed their nursing license by verifying with the Department of Health. Ms. Harris collects survey and statistical data for the program and prepares data reports.

Ms. Harris states that she is solely responsible for hosting monthly information sessions for the nursing program. These sessions include prerequisites, grades, transfer of credits, program ready lists, and answers to general questions.

Ms. Harris states that she does not supervise. Ms. Harris is responsible for ordering office supplies and purchase orders for the skills lab. Ms. Harris states she does not perform budget work. Ms. Harris states that she sends approval and denial letters, and records and transcribes meeting minutes. Ms. Harris feels she performs the same job duties as the Program Assistant for the dental hygienist program.

Comments from Ms. West (Supervisor)

Ms. West is Ms. Harris's supervisor and the Dean of Health and Human Services. Ms. West stated that Ms. Harris does not perform job duties independently; she works with a team of staff.

Ms. West states that the program requirements for the database were developed by the nursing faculty. Ms. West feels that managing the database is an important part of the nursing program and that Ms. Harris works hard to maintain the database.

Ms. West asserts that Ms. Harris's work is directed by the Nursing Director and is monitored to ensure consistency and accuracy.

Ms. West states that the dental hygienist program is more complex than the nursing program. The dental hygienist program has a clinical office on site running a business. This program is responsible for public health and safety and trains students in a business function. Ms. West states that because of the complexity of the dental hygienist program they need an onsite coordinator which is the Program Assistant. Ms. West feels that Ms. Harris's job duties in the nursing program do not fall within the Program Assistant classification.

SCC's Rationale

SCC agrees that Ms. Harris maintains the database and notifies the students using a standard memo of acceptance or requests additional information. SCC states that once approval for the program is granted by the advisor, Ms. Harris enters the information into

the database. Initial approval is not performed by Ms. Harris, and the requirements are developed by the nursing faculty.

SCC states that Ms. Harris does not schedule appointments or meetings. Although, Ms. Harris orders office supplies, she does not monitor the program budget, nor does she inform the Dean of budgetary status.

SCC feels that the Office Assistant 2 classification best fits Ms. Harris's current position.

Reason and Basis for Finding

The class series concept for Program Assistant states:

Perform work requiring knowledge and experience that is specific to a program. Organize and perform work related to program operations independent of the daily administrative office needs of the supervisor. Represent the program to clients, participants and/or members of the public.

A program is a specialized area with specific complex components and discrete tasks which distinguish it from the main body of an organization. A program is specific to a particular subject. The specialized tasks involve interpretation of policies, procedures and regulations, budget coordination/administration, independent functioning and typically, public contact. Duties are not of a general support nature transferable from one program to another. Performance of clerical duties is in support of incumbent's performance of specialized tasks.

The definition for Program Assistant states:

Perform specialized technical/clerical duties in support of a program activity.

Ms. Harris describes her main job duties as maintaining a database in the nursing program. Ms. Harris enters information into the database. Ms. Harris performs clerical functions such as typing memos, ordering office supplies, and hosting information sessions. Ms. Harris agrees that she does not coordinate or administer a budget. The majority of Ms. Harris's tasks are not performed independently and are reviewed by the Dean for accuracy.

The class series concept for Office Assistant 2 states:

Positions in this category provide a variety of clerical services and/or secretarial duties in support of a work unit, department, supervisor(s), staff members, and/or

general day-to-day office operations. Services provided and duties performed include functions such as the creation, storage, retrieval, mailing, and posting of documents, data, and records, providing assistance to others in direct support of the work, providing information to others about services available, assisting customers with access to services, updating web sites, preparing typed documents, screening calls and visitors, making travel arrangements, scheduling meetings and/or classes, taking notes and transcribing minutes, keeping supervisor's and/or staff member's calendar(s) and committing supervisor's and/or staff member's time.

Positions in this category operate office equipment such as computers, word processors, typewriters, calculators and copy machines. Positions may operate word processing equipment a majority of the time and/or operate data entry equipment such as remote terminals, computers, sorters, interpreters, optical readers and scanners to input, retrieve, sort, and interpret data.

The definition for Office Assistant 2 states:

Clerical, Office Support positions differ from Secretarial positions in that the primary focus of Clerical, Office Support positions is to perform a variety of clerical duties in support of office or unit operations.

The majority of the time Ms. Harris's position is responsible for maintaining and entering information into a database. Ms. Harris affirms that she provides assistance to others in direct support of the work, provides information to others about services available in her monthly information sessions, assists customers with access to services, prepares typed documents and takes notes and transcribes meeting minutes. These duties are consistent with the Office Assistant 2 classification.

As previously noted by the Personnel Resources Board (PRB), the guidance provided in the Department of Personnel's Classification and Pay Administrative Guide establishes that the following standards are primary considerations in allocating positions:

- a) Category concept (if one exists).
- b) Definition or basic function of the class.
- c) Distinguishing characteristics of a class.
- d) Class series concept, definition/basic function, and distinguishing characteristics of other classes in the series in question.

After reviewing the documentation and comments from all parties with regard to Ms. Harris's assigned duties and responsibilities, I conclude the Office Assistant 2 classification best describes Ms. Harris's position.

Appeal Rights

RCW 41.06.170 governs the right to appeal. RCW 41.06.170(4) provides, in relevant part, the following:

An employee incumbent in a position at the time of its allocation or reallocation, or the agency utilizing the position, may appeal the allocation or reallocation to the Washington personnel resources board. Notice of such appeal must be filed in writing within thirty days of the action from which appeal is taken.

The address for the Personnel Resources Board is 2828 Capitol Blvd., P.O. Box 40911, Olympia, Washington, 98504-0911.

If no further action is taken, the Director's determination becomes final.

Enclosure: Exhibit List